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New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Biegman (Netherlands), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Programme of work

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I should like to make two announcements.

The first relates to sub-item (j) of agenda item 17, entitled "Appointment of members of the Joint Inspection Unit". As members know, the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session will appoint four members to the Joint Inspection Unit to fill the vacancies arising from the expiration of the terms of office on 31 December 1995 of Mr. Tunsala Kabongo of Zaire, Mr. Andrzej Abraszewski of Poland, Mrs. Erica-Irene Daes of Greece and Mr. Richard Hennes of the United States of America.

The Secretariat has informed the President that several African States — namely, Burkina Faso, Senegal, the Sudan and Togo — intend to propose candidates. There would therefore be at least four candidates for one seat.

The Eastern European States have endorsed Poland to propose a candidate for one seat.

The Western European and other States have endorsed Greece and Germany to propose candidates. The United States also intends to propose a candidate. There are, therefore, three candidates for two seats.

By letter dated 19 October 1994, the President requested the assistance of the Chairmen of the Group of African States and the Group of Western European and Other States in securing agreed candidatures. Unfortunately, as of today the situation remains unchanged.

It is, therefore, the intention of the President to convene a plenary meeting of the General Assembly on Tuesday, 22 November, in the afternoon, so that the Assembly may select, by secret ballot, one country from Africa and two countries from Western European and other States which will be asked to propose candidates for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit.

Should an agreement be reached before the vote, the President shall inform the Assembly accordingly.

My second announcement relates to agenda item 37, entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", which will be discussed Wednesday, 23 November.

Members will recall that at the 85th plenary meeting of its forty-eighth session, on 20 December 1993, the General Assembly adopted resolution 48/162 on "Further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields".

94-87106 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum. When the result of a recorded and/or roll-call vote is followed by an asterisk, see annex to the record.

In accordance with the provisions contained in annex II of resolution 48/162, I have requested Mr. Ernst Sucharipa, of Austria, to be the coordinator for the informal consultations on item 37 and all its sub-items. In this connection, the time and venue for the informal consultations will be announced in the *Journal* in due course.

Agenda item 158 *(continued)*

Report of the International Conference on Population and Development: report of the Conference (A/CONF.171/13 and Add.1)

Mr. Karsgaard (Canada): Canada welcomes the successful conclusion of the International Conference on Population and Development and the adoption of its wide-ranging Programme of Action. The consensus reached by more than 180 delegations, representing diverse regions, religions, cultures and political systems throughout the world, is even more remarkable since it addresses sensitive and sometimes controversial subjects that are at the very heart of human relationships.

We would especially like to thank the Government and the people of the Arab Republic of Egypt for their hospitality and important contribution as hosts for the conference, and the Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development for her untiring efforts on behalf of all those involved in population activities.

One of the most important achievements of the Conference is the acceptance of a new approach to population issues. This approach recognizes that social and economic development — rather than adherence to strict demographic targets — is central to achieving a balance between the number of people on our Earth and their demands on the world's ecosystems. Fundamental to this approach is the recognition that the empowerment of women, through education, income generation and improved health services, is the key to the development process.

Countries have committed themselves to reducing infant and maternal mortality rates, ensuring equal education opportunities for girls, paying more attention to the reproductive health needs of adolescents and improving the access and availability of health care, including reproductive health care services. The Cairo Conference placed a new emphasis on reproductive health, sexual health and reproductive rights, particularly for women, providing women with greater choice in the regulation of their own fertility.

Unprecedented consensus was reached on international migration, which was treated in a comprehensive and balanced way and stressed cooperation between receiving and originating countries. The Programme of Action makes a strong statement in support of family reunification and directly links the long-term manageability of international migration with ensuring that the option of remaining in one's country is a viable one. We note the call for an international conference on migration and development which was made during the Cairo Conference. We believe that such a conference could serve to advance the progress made on migration issues during the International Conference on Population and Development. However, we are not interested in a conference for the sake of a conference. We would support such an initiative if we were convinced it would build on and strengthen the consensus on migration we achieved in Cairo. A necessary precondition of that, in Canada's view, would be broad agreement, in advance of convening such a conference, on its objectives and process. We are, of course, willing to work with other countries to prepare the necessary ground for an eventual conference.

In addition, we note that a proposal for a similar conference on migration issues has been discussed pursuant to General Assembly resolution 48/113. We strongly urge consolidation of these overlapping initiatives. In our view, the international community should be considering one proposal only for an international conference on migration. We believe the appropriate framework for doing so is our consideration of the proposal emanating from the International Conference on Population and Development.

(spoke in French)

The process leading up to the International Conference on Population and Development, and the Conference itself, provided a model for the involvement of non-governmental groups and experts in the development of international approaches to global challenges. The increasing importance of non-governmental partnerships in the development and delivery of population programmes is entrenched in the Programme of Action.

The Programme of Action forms an international blueprint for action on a wide range of related issues

including population growth rates, reproductive health, international migration and the environment. The scope of the document, the degree of consensus reached and the urgency of the challenges addressed demand that we transform the recommendations from the Cairo Conference into action and results.

During the preparatory process for the International Conference on Population and Development, Canada placed particular importance on the follow-up aspects of the Programme of Action. We were pleased to be able to chair a working group on follow-up during the third preparatory conference, held in April this year.

The final chapter of the Programme of Action, "Follow-up to the Conference", offers detailed and prescriptive recommendations for national, subregional and regional activities and activities at the international level.

(spoke in English)

The Programme of Action states that the Economic and Social Council should assist the General Assembly in "promoting an integrated approach" to population and development issues

> "and in providing system-wide co-ordination and guidance in the monitoring of the implementation of the ... Programme of Action." *(A/CONF.171/13, para. 16.23)*

The document further states that this approach should begin with a review of

> "the roles, responsibilities, mandates and comparative advantages of both the relevant intergovernmental bodies and the organs of the United Nations system addressing population and development". *(A/CONF.171/13, para.16.25)*

There are at least 23 units, bodies and organizations within the United Nations system involved in the wide range of population activities addressed in the Programme of Action. This illustrates the degree to which population issues are recognized within the United Nations system as being interconnected. But it also illustrates the true breadth of the coordination challenge that faces us. It is important to ensure that the recommendations on institutional follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development are coordinated with activities envisaged by the Agenda for Development. The Economic and Social Council high-level segment should put forth clear guidance on effective and realistic mechanisms to implement goals established at this and at other conferences, as mentioned in paragraph 34 of the report of the Secretary-General on an Agenda for Development (A/49/665). In this regard, the preliminary results of the development of a common framework should be brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council in its high-level segment in 1995.

While all United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and related United Nations organizations should review their own programmes and strategies in the context of the Programme of Action, we should not contemplate major shifts in responsibilities before the review of mandates and comparative advantages envisaged and strongly endorsed in the Programme of Action itself actually takes place. Furthermore, the review of the mandate of the Population Commission as an intergovernmental body should include a broader policy approach, reflecting the scope of the Programme of Action.

After considerable discussion the international community agreed on the need for increased resources to reach the goals agreed on in the Programme of Action. It is Canada's view that the need for efficient and effective use of resources is as important as the need for additional resources. Indeed the latter is often an end product of the former.

Canada recognizes the important contribution of the United Nations Population Fund in the field of population and development, as well as the steadily increasing level of voluntary funded assistance it extends to developing countries.

In conclusion, we are pleased that the UNFPA has assumed the major advocacy role on population issues. This is reflected in the success of the Cairo Conference and will be realized in the strong will of member States to turn words into action.

Mr. Isakov (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian)*: May I first of all express our sincere gratitude to the President and Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt, especially Mrs. Nafis Sadik, whose energetic efforts contributed greatly to the success of the International Conference on Population and Development.

The Cairo Conference marked a breakthrough in harmonizing a general approach by the international community to many important aspects of universal

development and the institution of the family; the human rights to life and reproduction; the responsibility of parents and society for the education and development of future generations; the regulation of the dynamics and distribution of population; migration; and general rights and opportunities for women in the process of development.

We wish to draw attention to certain questions relating to the implementation of the decisions taken at the Cairo Conference.

First, what is now of critical importance is the generally universal approach and interaction *vis-à-vis* problems of population based on recognition of the variety of problems and the specific interests and tasks confronting various countries and regions. That is the thrust of the Cairo recommendations, especially concerning the provision of technical assistance to economies in transition. Russia considers that this provision has to be put into effect. It is in full conformity with the letter and spirit of Cairo and must be adequately reflected in the activities of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), regional economic commissions, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and other competent international organizations, in conformity with their mandates and possibilities.

Secondly, the decisions of Cairo provide a new approach to the problems of population, going beyond simply regulating demographic situations and birth rates. They encompass at the same time protecting the reproductive health of mothers, ensuring medical services, developing education, reducing the impact of environmental degradation, ensuring gender equality, and so on. Clearly, the necessary changes will have to be made in national policies and international activities.

Thirdly, the trend towards developing a new cooperative partnership at all levels, national, regional and international, presupposes a more active role for non-governmental organizations, voluntary groups, the private sector, academic circles, and local grass-roots organizations. Our ability to develop these activities will depend to a large extent on the implementation of the Cairo Programme.

There will have to be careful monitoring of changes in the global demographic situation in the context of the social and economic development of States in order that technical adjustments can be made, if necessary, in a timely fashion — as is stressed in the Cairo Programme of Action. Of course, these changes must not encroach on the Cairo cardinal principles and should fully take into account the sovereign rights of States to shape and conduct their own internal population policy.

In our view, the United Nations system's implementation of the decisions taken at the Cairo Conference will require effective coordinating and monitoring machinery to harmonize inter-agency activities, on the one hand, and, on the other, to contribute to developing cooperation with organizations outside the system. At this session of the General Assembly we should agree to assign at least some of those functions to the Population Commission of the Economic and Social Council. It goes without saying that the Commission's mandate and membership must be expanded and that changes must be made in the parameters of its working relationship with the United Nations Population Fund. With regard to that Fund's future activities, we feel that it should remain the centre of United Nations operational activities in the population field and the fulcrum for concrete regional and country projects and for analysing and developing recommendations for national strategies in the field of population.

Mr. Kharrazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset I should like to thank the Secretary-General and the secretariat of the International Conference on Population and Development for their devotion and tireless efforts before and during the Conference. I should also like to refer to the pivotal role of the President of the Conference and the Chairman of the Main Committee in ensuring the success of the Conference.

The Cairo Conference, which was held at a crucial juncture in the history of international cooperation for sustainable development, provided us with an opportunity to examine the question of population from different angles. On the one hand, influenced by the outcome of the world Summit on Environment and Development, the Conference was faced with the challenge of addressing the population question in its entirety, taking into account the close link between population, development and the environment. On the other hand, attempts had to be made to reconcile divergent views on various subjects stemming from existing religious, ethical and cultural diversities.

Fortunately, the Conference was able to respond superbly to these challenges. It set an example. We all learned that, if the existing diversities are duly

recognized, many differences and misunderstandings can be solved. In other words, no country or specific group of countries should try to impose a particular set of values on the rest of the world. Furthermore, in the implementation of the Programme of Action religious values should be taken into account. Here I should thank all those delegations that played a constructive role in finding a common ground for consensus during the negotiations.

The Cairo Conference should not be perceived as an end. It was a starting point for sincere international cooperation in population activities. We have a long road ahead. We have committed ourselves to full implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action, an objective that cannot be attained singlehandedly.

Overshadowed as it was by other controversial issues, the question of financing the Programme of Action received less attention. The 16-chapter Programme of Action sets out a series of recommendations on population and development, including sustained economic growth, protection of the integrity of the family, combating HIV and AIDS, protecting the health of adolescents, gender equity, urbanization, reproductive health, poverty alleviation, family-planning services and so on. Although the developing countries are working hard to respond to these urgent needs, the financial requirements of the Programme of Action goes well beyond their national capabilities. To be more specific, given the extreme resource constraints in developing countries caused by the prevailing unfavourable international economic environment, it is difficult for those countries to mobilize adequate national resources. Accordingly, without the provision of substantial external resources on an assured basis the chances for full and expeditious implementation of the Programme of Action are slim. Specific financial commitments commensurate with the scope and scale of the foreseen activities should be made to guarantee the attainment of the objectives set forth by the Conference.

The Programme of Action calls for the mobilization of adequate resources from all available funding mechanisms, including multilateral, bilateral and private sources. None the less, provision of financial resources for population programmes should by no means lead to a decline in contributions to the other United Nations development activities.

With regard to follow-up to the Conference, I should like to underline the importance of strengthening the Population Commission of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and of coordination between all relevant organizations of the United Nations system. Moreover, we have carefully studied the proposal on establishing a new executive board for the United Nations Fund for Population Activities. However, it seems that there is a need for a detailed report on the advantages, as well as the financial costs, of setting up a separate Executive Board for the UNFPA.

Given the link between the International Conference on Population and Development and the forthcoming World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, the output of the Cairo Conference should be used as an input for these international conferences. At the same time, more attention should be given to the constructive role of the family and religious values in social development.

I should now like to touch briefly upon the population policies and programmes of the Islamic Republic of Iran. During the past decade, the country faced unprecedented population growth, reaching as high as 3.6 per cent in 1987. The following three essential factors contributed to the hike in population growth: first, the lack of a clear and coordinated family-planning programme; secondly, there was a significant decline in the infant mortality rate, from 115 deaths per 1,000 births in 1976 to 25 per 1,000 births in 1994; and, thirdly, an influx of refugees from neighbouring countries.

Against this background, given the concern over the unmanageable population growth, population policy was one of the first priorities on the agenda of the first five-year economic and social plan, which began in 1989. The pillars of our population policy have been as follows: re-evaluation of laws and regulations that conflict with the country's family-planning policy; improving the literacy rate, particularly through provision of schooling for women; lowering the infant mortality rate by expanding primary health-care services; facilitating the full participation of women in economic, social and political activities; improving the quality and scope of family-planning services through, *inter alia*, education, training and the use of reliable contraceptive methods; supplying all types of contraceptives free of charge and making them accessible to all people across the country; encouraging the participation of people, especially women, in family-planning education; enhancing the coordination of various population programmes through the establishment of the Birth Control Council, with the participation of all relevant organizations; using applied research to promote the quality of family-planning

programmes; and the expansion of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, especially with United Nations agencies and programmes.

The achievements of the programme have been very encouraging. In 1993 the population-growth rate dropped to 2.3 per cent. Statistics suggests that, as the programme has continued, the population-growth rate has dropped further, to 1.8 per cent in 1994. It is worth stating that this decline in population growth has been achieved in spite of encouraging young people to marry.

I cannot fail to mention the crucial role of women in the accomplishment of our family-planning programme. Without their active participation in decision-making and implementation, most of our achievements would have been beyond our reach.

In conclusion, I would like to assure the Assembly of the firm commitment of the Islamic Republic of Iran to doing its share in guaranteeing the success of the decisions of the Conference.

Mr. Slade (Samoa): Samoa joins previous speakers in welcoming the Programme of Action adopted in Cairo at the International Conference on Population and Development. The Programme of Action marks the resolve and commitment of us all to seeking solutions, in the context of sustainable development, to the current urgent population challenges facing our global community. It is a Programme that, aside from attempting to bring about an improved quality of life for all, will no doubt have a broad-ranging impact on population-related issues beyond the development and family-planning strategies and programmes of the past.

Allow me therefore warmly to congratulate all those who worked hard, against and under circumstances that at times were very difficult, to make this Programme a reality. We owe special gratitude to the Government and the people of Egypt for hosting and staging so truly remarkable and historic an event, as well as to Mrs. Nafis Sadik and her able staff for their quality work and wise guidance throughout.

Perhaps the greatest contribution and major achievement of Cairo was the recognition of the notion that enhancing the educational, political and economic opportunities of women is the surest approach to stabilizing population growth. Samoa fully supports the principle enunciated by the Conference that advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women is a cornerstone of population- and development-related programmes. We should remind ourselves that women are the bearers of our children and are surely in the best position — better than most economists, planners and demographers — to slow birth rates if given greater access to higher education, economic opportunities, political freedom and better health care. At the same time, there is a need for men perhaps to re-educate themselves and to take seriously their social and family responsibilities, including their sexual and reproductive behaviour, for the empowerment of women cannot come about without the joint and equal participation of men and women in society.

In this regard, Samoa would like to see appropriate attention and priority given by the international community and by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other agencies to enhancing the role of women in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

While we welcome the new concepts of empowerment of women and reproductive rights, they would still need to be accommodated, in our own case, within the context of the Pacific region, and indeed of our own national customs and practices. It is essential therefore that wide dissemination of relevant information on the Programme of Action of the Conference be carried out effectively. This information should be clear and easily understood.

Possibly the most effective place where the Programme of Action can be put to the test would be in the smaller countries of our international community. For the smaller countries, perhaps unlike the larger ones with greater populations, the issue of population is viewed and measured not so much in terms of absolute numbers, but primarily on its growth-rate impact on very limited land and natural resources as well as on available infrastructure and social services. For, when viewed in proportion to land size and available resources, small island countries such as my own, surrounded by oceans of socio-economic constraints and rising tides of population, are in fact among the most vulnerable and the least equipped to absorb additional population.

In the light of the accomplishments of Cairo, a number of international, regional and national measures and responsibilities will have to be taken to implement, effectively and speedily we hope, the Programme of Action.

Samoa and its Pacific island neighbours would have to look to reviewing what is known as the Port Vila Action Programme, which was used as the basis for the Pacific region's contribution to the Cairo Conference. The Cairo strategies will be looked at also in the context of our national and regional approaches to sustainable development in line with the outcomes of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, recently held in Barbados.

We welcome the specific tasks and goals set by the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, including the target of making family planning universal by the year 2015 as part of a broader approach to reproductive health and rights. Certainly at the national level, there would be a need to finalize our population strategy and to review existing national population programmes and priorities in accordance with the Programme of Action as we look at the various components of family planning in a much broader context.

However, in order to enhance the implementation of the Cairo Conference outcomes and to sustain their momentum, we will need adequate financial resources from the donor community and new strategy approaches and guidelines from the United Nations system, particularly from UNFPA as the lead agency on population. Overseas funding will be required to assist and to supplement national Government resources and activities with special attention to the requirements of the least-developed countries as called for in the Programme.

As we have stated in the past and as we stated in Cairo, my delegation would urge that donor funding for population activities should be new and additional, and not at the expense of funding for other development activities. For small island developing countries like my own, the feasible and realistic approach to population and sustainable development would be to find the balance between our development needs and the resources available to support them.

We believe that in addition to national and regional action, appropriate institutional measures in terms of coordination and collaboration amongst United Nations bodies and commissions would need to be addressed first, starting perhaps with an energized and revitalized UNFPA with new approaches and ideas for the population challenges of the next two decades. There would be need also, in our view, adequately to strengthen regional and subregional offices of UNFPA to respond effectively to the needs of Member countries.

We welcome the call to strengthen and enlarge the role of the UNFPA through the establishment of its own separate board; we do so in the expectation that this will enhance the effective implementation of the Cairo Programme.

We also see the need to review the role, composition and mandate of the current Population Commission, especially if it is to be the mechanism charged with the follow-up action for the Cairo Programme. We think these institutional arrangements must be linked to a better and more effective delivery of the Cairo outcomes and must be looked at closely by this Assembly at an early stage to ensure speedy implementation.

The institutional arrangements within the United Nations system must of course be considered against the background of the difficult financial environment now facing the international community. At the same time, there can be no doubt that our Organization must move to give reality to the commitments and the spirit of Cairo for the benefit especially of the very poor and needy amongst us. Otherwise, there would be little meaning and little value to the work which we have all invested in and which matured in Cairo.

Just as we set out in Cairo to move the population debate and approach beyond family planning, we should in the same manner act, and act rapidly, to translate and move those commitments in the Programme beyond words. The Cairo Conference, after all, was about people, and its success will be measured largely by its impact on the lives of all our peoples.

Mr. Mumbengegwi (Zimbabwe): It gives me great pleasure to address the General Assembly as we review for the first time the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo just over two months ago. May I at the outset take this opportunity to thank President Hosni Mubarak, the Government and the people of Egypt for the warm welcome and generous hospitality that were accorded to us throughout our stay in Egypt.

Let me also pay tribute to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mrs. Nafis Sadik, and her staff for their tireless efforts in the preparatory process for the Conference as well as in the organization of the

Conference itself. Their commitment and hard work complemented the determination and vision of all the States Members of this Organization in making the Conference a success.

Never before Cairo had population and development issues been addressed in an integrated manner by so many countries, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals. With some 183 countries participating in the Conference, the very level of attendance and the richness and intensity of the debate on issues of common concern to all of humankind — despite the differences in our cultures, backgrounds and beliefs — bore clear testimony to the importance that the entire international community attaches to issues of population growth, quality of life and sustainable development.

Out of this process of exhaustive debate, intense negotiations, patience and mutual accommodation, we emerged from Cairo with a consensus Programme of Action that clearly spells out the interrelationships between population and development. The Programme of Action also contains recommendations for the comprehensive integration of population concerns with developmental issues such as economic growth and the eradication of poverty. The Programme of Action contains measures for the incorporation of demographic concerns into environmental and developmental efforts, and in this regard should enable Governments to integrate population issues into their planning and decision-making processes. Indeed, the Programme of Action recognizes that the interrelationship between population and the environment must address not only population size and rapid growth rates, but also the crucial issue of wasteful production and consumption patterns.

Zimbabwe is pleased to note that rather than seek to renegotiate the results of the two previous major conferences on population — the World Population Plan of Action of 1974 and the Mexico City Declaration of 1984 — the Cairo Conference actually built upon these milestone agreements. The Conference indeed reaffirmed the principles and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action, including the sovereign right of each nation to formulate and implement its own population policies in accordance with national objectives and needs; the interrelatedness of population and development; the recognition that population policies are constituent elements of socio-economic development policies; the right of women to complete integration in the development process, particularly through equal access to education and equal participation in social, economic, cultural and political life; and the right of individuals and couples to choose freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so.

Zimbabwe believes in putting people, as individuals and as groups, at the centre of development efforts, not least in our population policies and programmes. Accordingly, we welcome the emphasis in the Cairo Programme of Action on individual choices and responsibilities and those of couples in the area of family planning and reproductive health services. It was clearly recognized in Cairo that issues of population growth and development cannot be divorced from those of the empowerment of women, their equality, better health care and access to education. Indeed, the Cairo Programme of Action places women at the centre of the new comprehensive approach to issues relating to reproductive decision-making and the overall development process. At the same time, the Programme of Action also recognizes the need for men to take equal responsibility in the full range of issues related to equity, health and family matters.

Zimbabwe has made some progress with regard to the empowerment of women since its independence 14 years ago. The Legal Age of Majority Act of 1982, for instance, conferred for the first time majority status on all women above the age of 18. This recognized the right of women to take personal decisions on all matters affecting their lives. Until then women, whatever their age, were the wards of their fathers before marriage and the wards of their husbands after marriage. The Matrimonial Causes Act of 1985 ensured that women received an equitable share of property and the payment of maintenance upon divorce.

Despite these important changes, however, Zimbabwe is engaged in an ongoing process of reviewing the legal system, particularly those areas relating to inheritance and to the custody of children.

The fact that the Programme of Action recognizes reproductive rights as human rights which have to be respected and protected where they exist and promoted where they do not is a remarkable achievement.

We believe that women should have access to quality family planning services, which we regard as a means to protect reproductive rights as well as to promote maternal and child health. It is in the context of reproductive health that we view with concern the high

levels of maternal mortality and morbidity in many developing countries. Much of this mortality and morbidity is related to the high incidence of unsafe and illegal abortions. My delegation is aware of, and indeed took part in, the lengthy discussions which took place on how the Programme of Action should deal with the issue of abortion. We are satisfied with the final conclusion on this matter and would reiterate that Zimbabwe does not regard abortion as a method of family planning. We believe that the provision of effective, quality contraceptive information and services, as well as other reproductive health services, should be the goal, in order to obviate, as much as possible, the resort to abortion.

In adopting the Cairo Programme of Action, we agreed on specific goals and recommendations on such interrelated areas as infant and maternal mortality, life expectancy, education, and reproductive health and family planning. The Programme of Action established concrete estimates of the financial resources which will be required for its implementation. But as the Secretary-General of the Conference cautioned at the closing meeting, on 13 September:

> "Without resources, ... the Programme of Action will remain a paper promise. We need a commitment from all countries, industrialized countries as well as developing countries, that they will take full responsibility in this regard". *(A/CONF.171/13/Add.1, p. 36)*

While we fully acknowledge that the larger portion of resources for population activities and related programmes are the responsibility of national Governments, it is imperative that the international community provide new and additional resources to support these activities and programmes. We believe that the resource requirements contained in the Programme of Action, though substantial, can be attained given the necessary commitment and political will.

Zimbabwe believes that the process of the International Conference on Population and Development demonstrated the importance of the links and partnerships that can be forged with non-governmental organizations and the private sector. The dynamic role that these groups played in the Conference clearly testified to the catalytic and innovative approaches non-governmental organizations have and can have in the implementation of population programmes. My delegation therefore attaches great importance to Chapter XV of the Programme of Action, on partnership with the non-governmental sector.

In recalling that only last month, on 20 October, the General Assembly marked the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the operations of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), I would be remiss if I did not underscore the significant role played by the Fund in ensuring the success of the Cairo Conference. Many of the proposals and recommendations contained in the Cairo Programme of Action have for a long time now been in the process of implementation by the UNFPA in the field. We believe that the UNFPA is well placed to play the lead coordinating role among United Nations agencies in the implementation of the new, integrated approach to population and development. The Fund will need the close support of all Member States in this regard.

The Programme of Action of the Cairo Conference does not stand in isolation. There is a definite continuity between this Programme of Action and such recent landmark global undertakings as the 1990 World Summit for Children, the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the expected conclusions of the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women next year, and the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in 1996. The Programme of Action of the Cairo Conference is indeed an integral part of the global consensus for sustained and sustainable development.

Mr. McKinnon (New Zealand): For the first time, at the Cairo Conference on Population and Development the international community addressed population growth in the broader context of achieving sustainable development. This is a key departure, opening a new path forward into the twenty-first century.

Population is no longer seen in Malthusian terms of limiting numbers through narrowly defined family-planning programmes to avoid the consequences of what was called a "population explosion". Nor is development alone seen as the panacea which once it was.

Instead, the Programme of Action adopted at the Conference reflects a shared commitment by developed and developing countries to slowing population growth and improving the quality of life of all citizens. The Programme highlights in a positive way the need for urgent action in achieving sustainable population growth.

That is not to say that the Conference was without controversy. Indeed, the Programme of Action agreed is remarkable precisely because it draws together issues

marginalized in the past because they were considered too sensitive or too difficult to handle. For the first time, reproductive and sexual health rights and the issue of unsafe abortion were put on the international agenda. The search for consensus language in these areas served an important purpose in clearing away misunderstandings and resulted ultimately in agreements which will underpin implementation of the Programme of Action by the international community.

Other core aspects of the Programme to which we attach importance relate to women and adolescents. We welcome the focus in the Programme on gender equity and the need to improve the political, social, economic and health status of women in order to achieve population and development goals. We also consider it appropriate that the Programme acknowledges the sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescents, given that the youth population is the fastest growing population sector in many countries.

The value of the Programme lies in the fact that it is both comprehensive and coherent. It draws together the multiple strands of the population and development nexus, without compromising the value of the document as a practical blueprint for action.

Agreement on the Programme of Action has brought us now to a critical stage. We need to ensure that the enormous effort that the international community put into the Cairo Conference is carried forward and that the advances we have made are not lost.

Progress towards sustainable population growth must spring from actions taken by individuals and groups of people in society at every level. The message from Cairo is that the Programme of Action has no single owner. The Programme is addressed not just to Governments but also to the private sector and non-governmental organizations, which have played such a valuable role to date on population issues. Furthermore, the Programme contemplates action at local, national, regional and international levels.

My Government has begun to consider the implications for New Zealand of relevant aspects of the Programme of Action. Many of the Programme's actions are already enshrined in domestic legislation and consistent with national policies. In some areas further progress could be made. Issues of particular importance to New Zealand include ensuring provision of appropriate community-based education and information on reproductive and sexual health and a further strengthening of Maori and Pacific Island women's opportunities for equity.

We will work hard to ensure that the perspectives of the Maori — the indigenous people of New Zealand — find appropriate reflection in relevant population-related policies and programmes. At the Cairo Conference my delegation was a strong advocate for chapter VI of the Programme of Action. That chapter should assist Governments in tailoring programmes that are responsive to the needs of particular sectors of society, including indigenous people, older people and people with disabilities.

The Programme recognizes that the nature of population and development needs varies both between and within countries and also from region to region. In this regard, the results of the regional preparatory meetings, as well as the Conference outcome itself, will provide a valuable resource and catalyst for further action at the regional level.

In the South Pacific region the process of preparing for and participating in the Cairo Conference has brought about a new awareness of the need to address the issues of population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development in an integrated fashion. Population growth is high in the region. Land resources, obviously, are scarce. As the Port Vila Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development from our region articulates, population concerns can be just as real for those living in countries with small populations as they are for those in countries with large populations. Through its bilateral aid programmes, New Zealand works with partner Governments of the South Pacific on a range of projects related to aspects of population and development. While our assistance is modest, we think it is well directed. We will be considering our official development assistance allocations in the light of the Programme of Action, ensuring, for example, that population and development issues are discussed during our regular dialogue with aid partners. We will also continue to support multilateral agencies working in the field of population activities, and we were very pleased to announce recently a 20 per cent increase in our 1995 contribution to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

At the international level the United Nations will remain a primary forum for maintaining the political momentum among Member States for carrying forward implementation of the Programme of Action. As identified in the Programme, regular review by the

General Assembly will be necessary. We will wish to ensure that any reporting requirements by Member States are realistic and tie in with existing obligations.

United Nations system follow-up to the Conference is also a central element of the Programme. Determining the precise roles of the relevant intergovernmental bodies and the organs of the United Nations system will be a detailed task, given the range of actors involved and the need to minimize overlap in activities. We look forward to a comprehensive review of arrangements at the 1995 session of the Economic and Social Council and hope to have the benefit of a detailed report from the Secretariat to assist in this process.

At this stage we do not believe there is a case for new institutional or governance structures. Instead, we expect the Economic and Social Council review will focus on clarifying the respective roles of the Population Division, the Economic and Social Council, the Population Commission, UNFPA and other United Nations organizations involved in implementing and monitoring the Cairo outcomes. A central objective will be to put population in the mainstream of the work of the United Nations development system.

Prior to the Economic and Social Council review we would expect the organs and agencies of the United Nations system to begin the process of adjusting their activities to take into account the outcomes of the Conference. In this regard, we welcome the steps taken by the UNFPA to broaden the scope of its programmes to ensure that the reproductive-health component is fully integrated. We expect that the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and of the UNFPA will wish to give further consideration to improving its governance of UNFPA, recognizing that agency's central role in the practical implementation of aspects of the Programme of Action relating to reproductive health and family planning.

It is clear that successful implementation of the Programme of Action will depend on the continuing political and practical commitment of the States represented here in the Assembly. Ultimately, however, the Programme belongs to individual men and women and to the children of tomorrow. The Programme aims to enhance their choices, their opportunities and their well-being. It provides a framework for individuals, groups and societies to change their destinies. We can and must act on it now.

Mr. Sucharipa (Austria): At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to commend Egypt for its outstanding organizational efforts and its warm hospitality during the International Conference on Population and Development, held in September 1994.

We express our sincere appreciation to Mrs. Nafis Sadik and the members of her able team, particularly David Payton, for their excellent work in terms of substantive and organizational preparation for the Conference.

After several months of intense preparations and consultations and thorough discussions in Cairo, the International Conference on Population and Development was able to achieve great success in important areas. I would like to focus specifically on five issues.

One of the major outcomes of the Conference in Cairo was the confirmation at the global level that population questions must constitute an essential part of development policy. We thus have to follow an integrated approach with regard to all relevant national and international endeavours.

It is worth noting that previous population conferences concentrated almost exclusively on family planning. At Cairo the international community recognized that decisions related to human fertility were influenced by a range of factors much wider than the availability of family-planning services alone. General education, health, status of women and gender-relations issues are also of primary importance in this regard.

We therefore welcome the wider focus at the Cairo Conference compared with that of previous population Conferences. We are particularly satisfied that it was possible to agree in Cairo on quantitative targets in the areas of primary education and infant mortality, as well as maternal mortality and morbidity, which hopefully will diminish the shocking gap in these areas between industrialized and developing countries.

Thirdly, the Cairo Conference also provided an opportunity to focus more specifically on the gender issue. It became quite clear that the advancement of women and the achievement of true equality between women and men is the key to any viable solution of the population question.

Fourthly, a further important issue, which has been developed through the debate, is the concept of reproductive health. In our view, this concept constitutes an important step forward, a concept which the international community should build upon and develop further.

Finally, we are also highly encouraged by the fact that the debate in Cairo was not hampered by North-South divisiveness and that it was possible to achieve consensus, particularly as regards the financial issues. There were promising indications concerning the readiness of donor countries to provide adequate funding for population programmes. This readiness was also signalled at the recent Pledging Conference for the United Nations Population Fund. We hope that the meeting between the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Development Assistance Committee later this month in Paris will confirm this.

The broad agreement reached at Cairo helped to clarify what was truly at stake: the welfare of millions of women now "crippled by unbridled fertility", to use the words of Fred Sai of Ghana, the Chairman of the Main Committee, at the closing session of the Conference; the welfare of their children and husbands; and the overall prospects for the peaceful and sustainable development of all mankind within the carrying capacity of the planet.

I should like to make a few remarks on the follow-up to the Conference.

Austria appreciates the decision of the Conference to use existing institutions and mechanisms to secure implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Programme of Action. This will also guarantee that institutional arrangements relating to follow-up to the Conference reflect the interrelationship of population and development issues.

Furthermore, we look forward to the discussion at the operational segment of the Economic and Social Council on the implications of the recommendations of the Conference for the operational activities of the United Nations in the field of development. In this respect, the Economic and Social Council should be given the benefit of a review by the Secretary-General of the mandates and roles of the various United Nations entities and intergovernmental bodies seized of population issues, so that the Council may formulate recommendations on the better use of existing capacities or relative advantages.

We call on the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis and on the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to further intensify their cooperation, based on their respective comparative advantages, to ensure that existing capacity within the United Nations system is utilized to the fullest possible extent.

In addition, the Population Commission should be encouraged at its next session, in April 1995, to examine its role in the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference and to report to the Economic and Social Council on this issue.

Finally, we believe that the question of providing the United Nations Population Fund with its own executive board merits further consideration, as provided for in resolution 48/162. The need to create a separate executive board should be considered to enable the UNFPA to carry out even more effectively the various operational tasks that fall to it in the wake of the Conference and allow it to focus better on the needs and priorities in the field of operations led by the United Nations Population Fund.

Mr. Popescu (Romania): By a happy coincidence, the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development took place in 1994 — the year marking the passage of two decades since the first World Population Conference, which was held in Bucharest in August 1974, and the 25 years of existence of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

My delegation takes this opportunity to reiterate our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting the third International Conference on Population and Development. We are grateful for its hospitality and for the excellent conditions that were provided, enabling the participants to complete their work successfully.

We should also like to compliment Mrs. Nafis Sadik, the Executive Director of UNFPA, who, in her capacity as Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development, put a tremendous amount of work, energy and enthusiasm into the preparations for the Conference.

Romania has always been concerned about the population problem and issues of population and development, and aware of the UNFPA's specific programmes and activities. It was for this reason that my

Government attached great importance to the Cairo Conference. Proof of this is the fact that the President of the Senate went to Cairo, as the personal envoy of the President of Romania, to deliver a message to the Conference. As the President said in his message, one of the first measures taken in Romania after the December 1989 revolution was the abolition of the restrictive legislation on abortion and contraceptives, thus ending the demographic policy imposed by the old totalitarian regime, a policy based on the birth rate. Beginning with the new Constitution approved by referendum in December 1991, several new laws have been adopted to ensure fundamental rights and social protection for the family, for mother and child and for youth.

In Romania we are now facing new demographic trends. These can be seen in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, too. The recent population and housing census, which was completed successfully with UNFPA assistance, for which we are most grateful, shows a severe decline in the fertility rate, a high level of infant mortality and an increase in the proportion and number of elderly persons. After considering these demographic imbalances, a panel of national experts on the subject "Population of Romania — Evolution and Perspectives" recently proposed the establishment of an office for demographic surveys and projections to undertake research into current and future population changes in the country and to draw the appropriate conclusions.

Over the two decades since the Bucharest Conference many parts of the world have undergone remarkable demographic, social, economic, environmental and political changes. Many countries have made substantial progress in expanding access to reproductive health care, lowering birth rates, lowering death rates and raising the expectation of life.

The basic principles and objectives of the 1974 first World Population Plan of Action remain valid, but they were completed and developed at the Mexico City Conference in 1984 and last September at the Cairo Conference to reflect the changes of the past 20 years. Formulated on the basis of the experience of the years 1974-94, the Cairo Programme of Action takes into consideration the unmet needs, the new challenges and the urgency of the population problem and indicates the strategies, planning and resources required to tackle it through the joint efforts of the whole international community. It contains a clear set of guidelines to enable Governments, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations to address collectively the critical issues of the relationship between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development at the end of this century and the beginning of the next millennium.

My Government reiterates its support for the principles and objectives of the Cairo Programme of Action. We attach great importance to the principle that the right to development is a universal and inalienable right, and in this respect we welcome the recognition by the Conference that countries with economies in transition need to be fully integrated into the world economy. The Conference proved its responsiveness and spirit of realism in recognizing the current problems of population and development in the countries with economies in transition, and requesting the international community to continue to promote a supportive economic environment for them, as well as for developing countries, in efforts to achieve sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development.

In the light of the difficult economic and social problems these countries face at present, the Cairo Conference agreed that they should also receive assistance for population and development activities. As far as Romania is concerned, as a country in transition in Eastern Europe, it will need further international technical assistance in family planning, for the continued training of medical personnel and those employed in population-related fields, and in child survival and health in order to reduce the rate of infant mortality, as well as in such fields as population and environment and the employment of women.

The Cairo Conference and its Programme of Action draw attention to the importance of partnership with the non-governmental sector. My delegation fully agrees that the partnership between Governments, international institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector should be strengthened in implementing the existing programmes for population and development, as well as in identifying new areas of cooperation. We welcome the UNFPA initiative in organizing national and regional meetings to exchange ideas about how Governments and non-governmental organizations can increasingly work together. Bucharest could host such a meeting for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

The Cairo Conference was a success, but its final success will depend on the ability of the international community to act in turning the recommendations of the Conference into action, and on how quickly end

efficiently the goals, objectives and actions of the Programme of Action will be implemented. It is just the beginning of a new phase of a long-range strategy for dealing with the issues of population and development which began in 1974.

International cooperation has always been essential for the implementation of population and development programmes during the past two decades, and it should continue to be so in the case of the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action. The positive evolution of international cooperation in population and development, including the increase in the number of financial donors, and successful cooperation among the developing countries make us optimistic in that respect. A good sign in this context was the fact that at the Conference both the South and the North agreed without much discussion on a global cost-sharing for population activities by the year 2015 on a 2 to 1 basis. We are also encouraged by the strong support for the UNFPA programmes and activities demonstrated at the recent United Nations Pledging Conference.

The UNFPA's resources for 1995 are expected to rise, we are informed, to approximately $300 million, the highest level in the history of the Fund. I am pleased to remind members that Romania, despite its current economic and financial difficulties, has increased its voluntary contribution to UNFPA for 1995 by 30 per cent, thus clearly demonstrating the importance the Romanian Government attaches to UNFPA and to the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action.

We recognize the importance of the active role regional organizations should play in the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference, and in our view the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) can act effectively in addressing specific population and development issues relevant to the region, particularly to Central and Eastern Europe. Bucharest could also host a review meeting of the United Nations/ECE Member States, whenever it is considered appropriate, on matters relating to the follow-up to the Cairo Conference. The meeting should be organized by the ECE in close cooperation with UNFPA.

Speaking of UNFPA, it is obvious that the Fund, as well as the United Nations Population Division, and, of course, the United Nations Population Commission, have an important role to play in the implementation of the Programme of Action, and they should have our full support.

Before concluding, I should like to mention that my delegation supports the Conference recommendation to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session contained in document A/CONF/171/13, report of the International Conference on Population and Development, to endorse the Programme of Action as adopted by the Conference.

Mr. Urbina (Mexico) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The International Conference on Population and Development was the culmination of an intensive process of global agreements, which proved to be highly innovative in promoting cooperation in population issues and in strengthening recognition of the interdependence between population, the environment, economic growth and development in general. Mexico welcomes the adoption by consensus of the Programme of Action that led the many valuable ideas and criteria of the international community towards a common resolve and cooperation.

The Mexican delegation wishes to emphasize some of the results of the Conference which, in our judgement, deserve priority attention.

First of all, we recognize that the preparatory activities that began in 1991 not only made it possible for the process to come to a successful conclusion but also produced innumerable outcomes with their own importance and impact. Particularly relevant were the results of the five regional conferences and the work and conclusions of the six expert meetings, as well as those of the many symposia and seminars promoted by the secretariat of the Conference. All these activities contributed to increasing public awareness of the subject, to the organization and dissemination of accumulated knowledge and to a critical assessment of the advances made and the challenges faced by population programmes. We must now make the best possible use of all the results obtained, which can be of great importance to the implementation at the national and regional levels of the Programme of Action adopted at the Conference.

As regards the Programme of Action, it is important to emphasize that the participants were unanimous in giving the highest priority to intensifying international cooperation for the eradication of poverty as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. We are certain that the elaboration of the "Agenda for Development" and the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development will help us to make progress in dealing with these problems.

Such fundamental topics as education, gender equity and reproductive health were also emphasized in the Programme of Action. The greatest progress may have been achieved on reproductive health, which has an extremely important place in the Programme. We wish to emphasize in particular the recognition of reproductive rights, the reiteration of the principle that family planning is an indispensable instrument in guaranteeing the right of couples and individuals over their reproductive processes, the aim of ensuring that each pregnancy is planned and each child is wanted, the recognition that abortion is a public-health problem and must be faced as such, and the importance given to protecting the health of adolescents — and especially to use information, education and communication activities to ensure more responsible behaviour.

Furthermore, the basic rights of individuals were reaffirmed as a principle for any action in the field, as was the sovereign right of each country to formulate and implement the population policies it deems appropriate, taking into account the diversity of current conditions and respecting specific religious and ethical values.

My delegation wishes to highlight the Conference's conclusions on a very topical subject — international migration. This subject is one of the clearest examples of the interdependence of countries. The fundamental factor underlying international migration is economic: the supply of and demand for qualified labour. Its end result is a productive complementarity reflected in shared benefits, not only in the economic but also in the cultural and social fields, due to the contributions made by migrants to the receiving countries. Refugees and migrants seeking asylum require specific attention, tailored to each situation.

It is therefore important to adopt a global approach to this phenomenon of migration, an approach that includes promoting dialogue and cooperation between countries of origin and countries of destination; guaranteeing the economic and social integration of migrants in the countries of destination; eliminating all discriminatory practices, especially against women, children and the elderly; protecting migrants against racism, ethnocentrism and xenophobia, which are unacceptable in educated and advanced societies at the end of the twentieth century. In a word, in order to maintain harmonious international relations, it is essential to guarantee the exercise by migrants of the basic human rights set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and ratified in the Programme of Action of the Conference. To that end, we wish to draw the General Assembly's attention to the proposal made in Cairo to convene an international conference on this subject. We are convinced that in so doing we would be giving international migration the attention it deserves as an issue that has the greatest relevance for the world at the end of this century.

We believe that it is essential to concentrate, from now on, on identifying more specific commitments to international cooperation with a view to implementing the Programme of Action we have adopted. The agreements reached at the Conference should lead to the elaboration of programmes on priority subjects and concrete commitments, so that the developed countries and international agencies can share with the developing countries the benefits of scientific and technological progress in a new framework of united partnership for proper development.

With this objective in mind, we wish to inform the General Assembly that there will be a meeting tomorrow of the Executive Board of the Committee of High-Level Governmental Experts — over which Mexico has the honour of presiding — which will be open to all the countries members of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and in which the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations will participate. The purpose of the meeting will be to analyse the proposals for the implementation of the Regional Latin American and Caribbean Plan of Action on Population and Development, in the light of the results of the Cairo Conference. Another meeting will take place in which international agencies involved in this subject will participate, and they will be requested to lend their technical and financial support for this regional Plan. We are confident that this will make an important contribution to ensuring that the world consensus recently adopted will take the most concrete form possible. We will consider, in particular, chapters XIII, XIV, XV and XVI of the International Conference's Programme of Action.

We wish gratefully to acknowledge the work done by the secretariat of the Conference, which was decisive for its success. We wish also to impress upon the General Assembly the need to provide greater financial support to the different branches of the Secretariat involved in this subject — first, to the United Nations Population Fund, the most important body for assisting countries in the implementation of the Programme, and also to the Population Division, members of which served as a joint

secretariat with that of UNFPA; its work confirmed once again its central importance as the body generating and disseminating the knowledge needed to evaluate and follow up world population trends.

The secretariats of the regional Commissions — in our case, ECLAC — also require greater support, because we are convinced that the subject of population must be included in the agendas of meetings held at the ministerial level and must be constantly addressed in order to ensure that the measures are effective and relevant and appropriate to the diverse contexts of our regions. At its last plenary session, ECLAC decided to establish an ad hoc sessional committee to follow up the Regional Plan of Action on population.

Lastly, we are convinced that we must strengthen the Population Commission of the Economic and Social Council as the basic intergovernmental body for the follow-up to the Programme of Action.

We feel that we should all be gratified by the success of the Conference. Now, we must all strengthen our commitment to ensuring that the world consensus moves from proposals to concrete action.

Mr. Cassar (Malta): The adoption on 13 September 1994 of the Programme of Action by the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo was one of the most important milestones in the international community's pursuit of a more comprehensive approach to development.

Debate on the Programme of Action at the various preparatory stages preceding and during the Conference was as widespread as it was intense, involving not only official delegations and those non-governmental organizations traditionally involved in population issues, but a much broader section of the public and the media as well. One can truly say that popular involvement in the discussion on the Programme of Action attained a level which was indeed global.

The list of Member States, observers, United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations which attended the Conference is impressive. Equally impressive were the preparations made by the Egyptian authorities to host the Conference.

In joining others in thanking the Government of Egypt for the excellent facilities, staff and services placed at the disposal of the Conference, Malta would like to reaffirm its appreciation for the warm hospitality with which the people of Egypt and in particular the people of Cairo, welcomed participants.

Egypt's contribution to the success of the Conference was not limited to its role of host. During the negotiations the delegation of Egypt left its mark as a consensus-builder, helping to bring about changes which, without doubt, facilitated the adoption of the Programme of Action.

May I also express the appreciation of my delegation for the efficient manner in which the Conference was organized and serviced by its secretariat. The leadership and contribution of the Secretary-General, Mrs. Nafis Sadik, were unique and instrumental in the final outcome of the Conference.

This delegation would like to express its appreciation for the inspiring manner in which Mr. Muhammad Hosni Mubarak, President of Egypt presided over the Conference and for the hard work of all members of the Bureau and of the officers of the Main Committee during the negotiations.

The net effect of the global interactive dialogue before and during the Conference could not but benefit proceedings as indeed it did. Apart from cultivating awareness on a number of issues which could otherwise have been marginalized, this dialogue helped to enrich the document with important perspectives which favour its implementation.

Population and development policies require more than the assent of Governments and international organizations. Their success depends on the active support of our populations, who are the key protagonists and decision-makers.

Just as peoples can be supportive of policies which are in harmony or coincide with their convictions, so is it likely that they would resist anything which is alien to cherished principles. In this respect, the Programme of Action places the right emphasis on respect for religious and ethical values and for diverse cultural backgrounds, respect which is so essential for such wide-ranging goals.

The Programme of Action notes that

"The maturing process undergone by international cooperation in the field of population and

development has accentuated a number of difficulties and shortcomings that need to be addressed". *(A/CONF.171/13, para. 14.2)*

The direction from Cairo is that such policies can never be viewed in isolation. Our approach should be wider in scope and take account of the manner in which all these policies are interrelated.

Indeed, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his recommendations on the Agenda for Development, published earlier this week, again stresses the need to view social and developmental issues in an integrated manner. My Government continues to support this approach.

As my Minister for Home Affairs and Social Development, Mr. Louis Galea, stated in his address to the Cairo Conference, our global responsibility for population is equalled by our global responsibility for global resources. He said that we, as the human race, must ensure that these resources are managed by using a global perspective and according to global needs.

The problem we collectively face today is to a large extent a problem of the type of socio-economic development and resource distribution and utilization that has taken place in the last few decades on this planet — and is still taking place.

The Programme of Action adopted in Cairo can contribute to resolving these issues, if all its parts are implemented, within the context of the principles which inspire it.

A selective approach, which emphasizes the implementation of a restrictive demographic orientation and sacrifices the developmental perspective, would be detrimental not only to the success of the Programme of Action itself but, more important still, to the confidence which our populations have in such conferences and gatherings.

My Government is confident that this will not be the case. We are convinced that there exists a broad-based international awareness which will prevent the adoption of unidimensional stances. A spirit of solidarity is taking root worldwide. Past attitudes of isolation, division and disharmony have, in many instances, been replaced by values which underline our common destiny and hence our common rights, our common responsibilities and our common obligations.

Nearly 30 years ago my country introduced the concept of the common heritage of mankind for the first time in this Assembly. This week that initiative is bearing fruit in Kingston, Jamaica.

We believe that population and development deserve to be viewed within the broader perspective of the common heritage. Only in so viewing the matter will we do justice to the efforts made in Cairo to produce a Programme of Action which, apart from reservations which we still have with regard to the inadequate protection of the rights of the unborn child, offers a positive strategy which integrates population issues within the much wider context of development.

Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh): Allow me to begin by expressing my delegation's sincere thanks to the Government and people of Egypt for making all arrangements to successfully hold the International Conference on Population and Development. We particularly appreciate Mrs. Nafis Sadik's efforts in skilfully guiding the preparatory process and the Conference itself.

I wish to associate myself with the views expressed by the Permanent Representative of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77. I should, however, like to take this opportunity to make a few points.

The Cairo Conference was historic in highlighting the interlinkages between the issues of population, development and the environment. This holistic approach is an important achievement and marked a significant step forward compared with the two earlier conferences held in Bucharest and Mexico City. Cairo also re-emphasized the critical need for international solidarity and cooperation on these issues in an increasingly interdependent world.

The 20-year Programme of Action that we adopted in Cairo has very aptly underlined the fact that priority attention must be accorded to sustained economic growth and development, particularly the eradication of poverty in developing countries. It cannot be over-emphasized that the goals of the Conference will not be reached if the number of people living in absolute poverty continues to increase, particularly in the developing countries.

An important achievement of the Conference was its success in establishing a clear link between population, unsustainable production and wasteful consumption

patterns. Developed countries have a special responsibility for remedial action in this regard.

The crucial question that the international community faces in the post-Conference period is the issue of translating into reality the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action. In this context, I would like to underscore some elements in our efforts to ensure the proper follow-up of the Cairo document.

First, national Governments have rightly been assigned the prime responsibility of formulating and implementing appropriate policies and programmes to carry out the provisions of the Programme of Action. The provisions of the Programme have to be applied taking fully into account the diverse traditions and religious and ethical values of the people of each country concerned. The central role of the family and the upholding of moral values in connection with family planning and related issues should be highlighted.

National efforts of the developing countries, however, must be supplemented by increased international cooperation. The creation of an international economic environment conducive to the promotion of sustained economic growth and development in poorer countries is crucial to ensure timely and full implementation of the Programme of Action.

We believe that the following issues are cardinal to enabling developing countries to take additional measures in the fields of population and development: intensified efforts on the part of the developed countries to implement the official development assistance target of 0.7 per cent is essential; new and additional resource flows to the developing countries on population and development issues need to be ensured; a durable solution of the debt problem of the developing countries which hampers their overall socio-economic development; market access for products from developing countries has to be facilitated and trade liberalization policies under the Uruguay Round agreements should have a favourable impact on these countries; the special needs of the least developed countries should be taken into account and special financial and technical assistance should be provided to them in order to assist their population and development activities; and capacity-building of the developing countries, particularly the least developed, should be given due importance. In this regard, technology transfer and sharing of research findings on population and development issues need to be highlighted.

The empowerment of women and their enhanced participation in development activities has been highlighted in the Programme of Action and deserves special priority in post-Cairo activities. The issues of education, primary health care and access to information remain high in our agenda. Human resources development, specially through enhanced access to education and training should be placed at the centre of our development efforts. Sharing and exchange of information on population programmes and activities should be emphasized. In this context, subregional and regional cooperation on population activities should be encouraged and strengthened.

Population policies and programmes are to be implemented taking fully into account the special needs of the poor and vulnerable sections of society. It has to be ensured that economic reform measures do not adversely affect the poor. In this regard, the Bretton Woods institutions should pay more attention to the social impact and social safety-nets while formulating and implementing structural adjustment measures.

We believe that the outcome of the Cairo Conference will meaningfully contribute to the preparatory processes of forthcoming international conferences, particularly the social Summit, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat-II). We feel that population and development concerns will be duly reflected in the final outcomes of these conferences.

The United Nations should continue to play an important role in the field of population and development and particularly to make operational the Programme of Action. In this regard, the existing mechanisms of the United Nations in the population and development field should be reviewed and strengthened taking into account Chapter XVI of the Programme of Action. Given the wide range of issues dealt with by the Conference and the number of recommendations contained in the Programme of Action, it will certainly be necessary to involve a number of United Nations bodies and agencies.

In this context, better coordination, particularly between the Population Commission, the Population Division and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), has to be ensured. We feel that there should be an intergovernmental agency charged with the responsibility of closely overseeing the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Programme of Action. In this regard the role and mandate of the Population

Commission needs to be reviewed through, *inter alia*, integrating development aspects with population issues. Strengthening the role of the UNFPA in mobilizing resources and implementing programmes should be given active consideration. The question of establishing a separate executive board of the UNFPA should also be considered in this regard.

Periodic review of the implementation of the Programme of Action is essential not only to review progress achieved but also to suggest new measures to achieve the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action. We feel that the reporting system of the United Nations in the field of population should be streamlined. The developing countries should be assisted in establishing national data bases on population and also in preparing reports.

As we underlined during the Cairo Conference, our Government has accorded high priority to policies aimed at a reduction of the population growth rate. Ours is an integrated policy covering basic health care, particularly of children, and family welfare, human resource development through education and training, alleviation of poverty and empowerment of women. We are making continuous efforts fully to integrate women in national development activities and have placed increasing emphasis on creating employment opportunities for women. Some non-governmental organizations are doing a commendable job in helping women, particularly those in the villages, to start small business enterprises. Working women even in remote villages are gradually becoming more conscious about reproductive health and family size.

Eradication of poverty is receiving the utmost priority in our population and development activities. The Government has allocated more than 30 per cent of the annual development budget to the social sectors in recent years.

Ensuring education for all, particularly of the girl child, and provision of basic health facilities are crucial for making population policies and programmes successful. Despite limited resources and technological constraints we have been implementing an ambitious plan in these two crucial areas. Our Government is implementing a long-term programme with respect to the provision of education to girls. Education for the girl child has been made free up to grade VIII and the Government is providing stipends to girl students at the secondary level. Our intensive efforts in the field of child health care have resulted in a dramatic increase in child immunization and a decline in child mortality rates. The Government has already taken appropriate steps to implement the recommendations of the Programme of Action. As the task is immense, it will require sustained and enhanced international support in all fields.

In conclusion, I should like to underscore the need for establishing a new and genuine global partnership based on shared but differentiated responsibilities in order to achieve the targets of the Programme of Action. A strong political will is also crucial to ensure that our commitments are translated into concrete actions so that our future generations will be able to live a better life.

Mr. Florencio (Brazil): Just over two months ago, the international community concluded the International Conference on Population and Development, with the adoption of the Cairo Programme of Action. Our first words must necessarily be ones of deep gratitude to the Government of Egypt, for the impeccable manner in which it organized the Conference, to the Egyptian people, for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to delegations from around the world, and to Mrs. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the Conference, whose dedication and untiring efforts were instrumental in its success.

I should also like to reaffirm our appreciation of the support extended by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to our national preparatory process. This support allowed for wide discussion among all segments of Brazilian society on the issues under consideration, and for the forging of a consensus view that was taken by the Brazilian delegation to the meetings of the Preparatory Committee and to Cairo. The validity of this process has led to its adoption as a model for our preparations for other United Nations conferences to be held in coming years.

In the long history of deliberations on population issues the Cairo Conference can be considered a landmark from a number of perspectives. Foremost among these is the fact that the Conference clearly defined the strong interlinkage between population issues and the broader aspects of development policies as well as the importance of the human being as both the object and the agent of those issues.

This humanistic and developmental approach to population questions derives from the growing awareness that individual decisions should be taken at the individual level, while the improvement in the social and economic

situation of individuals is the fundamental element for the achievement of population goals.

These two aspects of the question are clearly set out at the core of the decisions agreed upon at the Conference. Individuals must be given the means for the full realization of their economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. As is now abundantly evident, when couples — and, in particular, women — are in control of their own situation in all these domains, the control of population growth, through the control of fertility, will flow as a natural and voluntary consequence.

In this respect, the role of the State must be to ensure the conditions for the full and effective realization of these rights. For that reason, the Programme of Action sets out policies and recommendations in the essential fields of the empowerment of women and of improving the access to and the quality of public health and education services.

The International Conference on Population and Development was also important in that it provided a quantitative indication of the resources required for the implementation of the Programme of Action.

By assigning responsibility for the mobilization of some two thirds of these resources to the national level, the Conference recognized that the activities foreseen fall mainly in the domestic sphere. By identifying the need to obtain the remaining one third from international cooperation sources, however, the Conference also acknowledged that population issues are of global significance, a significance that stems not only from the moral imperative of the rich helping the poor but, essentially, from the fact that population factors have an impact on the entire international community.

It is gratifying to note that some industrialized nations have signalled their intention of living up to these commitments through enhanced financial support for international cooperation in the population field. It is our expectation that such commitments will effectively represent new and additional resources and not a mere reallocation away from other areas of cooperation. Furthermore, we hope such commitments will not fade along with the spotlight of international media and public attention that was focused on the stage of our deliberations in Cairo, as has been the case in the follow-up to other recent conferences.

The follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development is one of the main tasks conferred upon this session of the General Assembly. In this respect, my delegation is of the view that the fundamental institutional structure is already in place within the United Nations. What will be required is an adaptation of that structure to the enhanced scope of activities flowing from the Conference.

The Population Commission, on a par with other functional Commissions of the Economic and Social Council, should be given the means with which to carry out the responsibilities of the intergovernmental monitoring of the recommendations and commitments of the Conference. This will require a review of the mandate, composition and working methods of the Commission.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), under the dynamic leadership of Mrs. Nafis Sadik, and with the guidance and oversight of its Executive Board, should retain the overall responsibility for the operational implementation of international cooperation in the population field.

The possibility of establishing a separate executive board for UNFPA, which was proposed by the Group of 77 in the context of the restructuring and revitalization of the economic, social and related sectors, was deferred until the Conference. The increased emphasis on international cooperation that will necessarily be required if the aims of the Programme of Action are to be achieved would, in the view of my delegation, warrant this measure. We are aware, however, that such a decision does not yet count on widespread support. It would seem that at the very least we should agree to dedicate one full session of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-UNFPA Executive Board exclusively to UNFPA affairs. Finally, the Population Division must be strengthened in order to carry out the vital analytical and statistical work in the population field.

The work of the United Nations in the economic and social spheres has witnessed an unprecedented set of world conferences and summits over the past decade. Beginning with the World Summit for Children, we have focused on sustainable development in Rio de Janeiro, human rights in Vienna, the sustainable development of small island developing States in Bridgetown and now, population in Cairo. In coming years we will tackle the issues of social development in Copenhagen, of women, in Beijing, and of human settlements in Istanbul.

Remarkable as these achievements are, I should like to take this opportunity to refer to the proposal presented by the Minister of External Relations of Brazil, Ambassador Celso Amorim, at the opening of the general debate in the current session of the General Assembly, to the effect that a United Nations conference on development should be convened, at an appropriate time, in order to promote, in a wider conceptual framework, the integration into one synthetic and coherent ensemble the initiatives and programmes set out in this decade's sectoral conferences.

In conclusion, it is the view of the Brazilian delegation that the International Conference on Population and Development was a milestone by bringing a new approach to the population issue, an approach that recognized the human — and in particular women's — determining role in the matter. It was all the more noteworthy by its underscoring of the possibilities of international cooperation based on a frank and constructive dialogue that harmonized distinct perspectives.

In essence, the Cairo Conference represents an extraordinary outcome for the future of international relations, one that gave us all a profound example of reciprocal tolerance. It is an example that we hope will guide us well in our future deliberations in the economic and social fields.

Mr. Bhakta (India): My delegation is happy to be participating in this important meeting of the General Assembly to follow up the landmark International Conference on Population and Development recently concluded in Cairo, the third such conference. Following our earlier experiences in Romania and Mexico, my Government participated in all the preparatory meetings and in the Conference itself with very specific objectives.

First, we aimed to secure international acceptance of the interlinkage between population and development. Secondly, we sought to emphasize the fact that, in the context of developing countries, the main way to bring about development is by sustained economic growth. Thirdly, we reiterated that such sustained economic growth requires a supportive economic environment consisting, *inter alia*, of an open, equitable, secure, non-discriminatory and predictable international trading system where the burden of international debt can be reduced, where new and additional financial resources will be made available and where access to technology can be assured. Fourthly, we sought international acceptance of the estimate of resources required for supporting the Programme of Action in developing countries and in countries with economies in transition, particularly in the area of reproductive health and family planning. A natural corollary to this was to secure agreement from Member States on an increase in the external assistance component of these resource flows.

On balance, my delegation has reason to be satisfied with the outcome of the Conference. The consensus arrived at in Cairo, as we are all aware, is an extremely delicate one, which further emphasizes the need for the elements which went into the consensus to be respected by all parties concerned, and not singled out selectively for follow-up action. My delegation therefore sees the follow-up efforts that are under way as crucial for consolidating the gains of Cairo.

As a developing country, we are happy that the right to development has been included as a human right, and that provisions concerning the empowerment of women and the elimination of discrimination against them have been accepted. We are, in particular, gratified that the promotion of a supportive economic environment specifically enumerated in provisions of the agreed document was agreed to, and we are confident that the follow-up to the Conference will ensure specific measures to achieve it.

We joined the consensus on certain quantified goals in such areas as life expectancy, infant mortality and maternal mortality. We have observed with satisfaction that the estimates of resources required for supporting the Programme of Action in developing countries and in countries with economies in transition and their increase from between one fourth and one third were agreed to at the Conference. My delegation welcomes reiteration at the Conference of our own Government's position that the "20/20" proposal, stipulating that 20 per cent of official development assistance should be in the social sector, requires greater clarity and further discussion. We are hopeful that funds and agencies will take note that this concept has to be discussed further before being adopted in any manner.

My delegation was instrumental also in modifying formulations implying a *quid pro quo* for debt relief in exchange for domestic Government assistance on issues of population and development. We are grateful that no such *quid pro quo* was accepted at the Conference.

My delegation, like several others, was anxious at the start of the Conference about the controversy surrounding the references to abortion and the use of

terms such as sexual and reproductive rights, safe motherhood, fertility regulations and reproductive health services. We were particularly happy that these controversies were resolved through the use of more acceptable terminology consensually agreed upon. My delegation supported the basic agreements that made such a consensus possible. We agree with the consensus that Governments should deal with the health impact of unsafe abortions, and that the prevention of unwanted pregnancies must be given highest priority, thereby eliminating the need for abortions. We also stressed during meetings of the Preparatory Committee that women who had unwanted pregnancies should have ready access to reliable information and compassionate assistance and to quality services in the event of medical crises arising from abortions. We have stressed that where abortion is not against the law it should be safe. These elements were endorsed by consensus at the Conference, and my Government is committed to making progress along these lines.

We would like especially to stress the need for access to newer technology with respect to matters and issues that were discussed and agreed upon at the Conference: the fields of family planning, reproductive health and infant survival without the imposition of prohibitive costs. In our delegation's view, resources required for implementing the Programme of Action adopted at Cairo need to be made available on a grant basis or on concessional terms, preferably through multilateral or United Nations agencies and without curtailment of external assistance in other developmental sectors. A mechanism also needs to be established for monitoring the flow of external assistance for implementing the Programme of Action *vis-à-vis* the global figures accepted at the Conference.

In conclusion, my delegation feels that the issue of a separate executive board for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) should be considered only when substantial resources become available to the Fund. As a developing country, India cannot agree to discussions on this issue unless additional resources are assured. We would also encourage consideration of the fact that, when a board is named it must represent the interests of the users of UNFPA funds, and not those of substantial donors alone. My delegation is committed to supporting any follow-up measures to the International Conference on Population and Development which may be arrived at consensually after intergovernmental discussions.

Mr. Samana (Papua New Guinea): In the 20 years since Bucharest, the international community has successfully forged a common vision and reached a global consensus on a Programme of Action that will serve as a blueprint from which each State will shape its own policies and programmes according to its specific needs and priorities.

The Cairo Conference was a great success, and we commend Mrs. Sadik and the secretariats of the specialized agencies and organizations that were involved for their excellent work. We would also convey our gratitude and appreciation to the Government and the people of Egypt for their warm hospitality and efficient management of the Conference facilities.

The international community has rightly, and appropriately at this moment in history, adopted a comprehensive Programme of Action that integrates population management issues with the overall resource development and management aimed at achieving social and political stability in all parts of the world.

Population and development perspectives, as outlined in the Programme of Action, indeed require our support in order to promote policies and strategies that would enhance sustained economic growth and sustainable development, with the direct participation of our people in all spheres of development.

The ultimate success of the process will obviously depend on the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action, in the manner outlined in Chapter XIV of the document. A realistic estimate of the possibilities for success depends on a number of factors, and I wish to focus on two.

First, there is a need to establish realistic and practical strategies involving all sectors of the community at the national level, including overall Government commitments in terms of providing adequate funding and improving policies governing intersectoral strategies. Secondly, international support by donor agencies and multilateral organizations for national programmes will be essential in attaining the targets and goals set by the Cairo Programme of Action.

My delegation notes with much gratitude that a significant number of countries have pledged to increase their contributions towards the implementation of the Programme of Action. We take particular note of the United States Government's contribution of an estimated $40 million for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). My delegation also appreciates the fact that

UNFPA has already embarked on identifying mechanisms for implementing the Programme of Action in the Asia-Pacific region.

We are, however, aware of, and concerned at, the fact that for many developing countries the specific targets set in this document could be very difficult to achieve owing to their serious domestic fiscal situations, resulting from the downturn in commodity prices and from the generally unfavourable international trading environment.

Again in the context of developing countries, the lack of reliable data, skills and information technology adds to the difficulty in discerning realistic socio-economic indicators to provide appropriate guidelines in determining priorities in resource allocation in the medium and long term. Many developing countries, therefore, may not be in a position to adequately cope with the critical and initial stages of the implementation of the Programme of Action.

With this in mind, Papua New Guinea believes that international support, in the form of additional financial and technical assistance, must be directed more towards institutional capacity-building and the operational aspects of implementing the Programme and specific projects.

To facilitate the effective implementation of the Programme of Action at a practical level, the South Pacific island countries would place emphasis on capacity-building — including the establishment of training facilities and the financing of transport and communication infrastructure — and improving information technology to facilitate the establishment of a sound and factual database for planning purposes and to provide effective aid in decision-making.

Since education plays a very important role in terms both of human resource development and of the dissemination of information, Papua New Guinea is already using appropriate curriculum material in our school system to bring about a greater awareness among adolescents of sex education and reproductive health. National educational reform policies, for instance, emphasize the need for greater access to this information by the girl child, as well as basic, quality education for all. The literacy programmes of the National Education Department involve non-governmental organizations and in particular women, and thus provides a very useful network through which information on population and development issues can be disseminated.

Mr. Arzoumanian (Armenia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Apart from the use of educational institutions, Papua New Guinea has found that a radio communication network utilizing a multilingual medium has been a very effective and efficient channel for carrying out public-awareness programmes and activities related to population and development. Cultural theatre groups in Papua New Guinea whose performances have family-planning themes constitute yet another innovative manner for development agents to channel information, in a cost-effective manner, to the broadest possible spectrum of the population of the various isolated communities.

We support the continued UNFPA emphasis on maternal and child health as part of the larger components of population planning and development activities. Child-health issues remain a grave concern for Papua New Guinea and the Pacific region as a whole. The Papua New Guinea Government recently initiated a child-survival programme focused on the problems of nutrition and the health needs of children.

While international migration may not be a big problem for Papua New Guinea, internal migration, particularly from the rural to the urban areas, is causing a serious problem for the health and basic livelihood of ordinary citizens. Studies indicate that the urban population is growing much more rapidly than the average national population. It is estimated that by the year 2015 urban centres are likely to hold 20 to 30 per cent of the total population. It is grossly beyond the capacity of urban authorities and Governments to cater adequately to the basic needs of these communities.

The current international Programme of Action on population and development could have been strengthened to adequately reflect concerns relating to strategies for rural and regional development. Imbalances in rural urban development and regional disparities directly influence migrational patterns. To handle these growing issues more effectively at the national level, the Government of Papua New Guinea has established a National Population Council as a body for coordinating policies on population and development. This body provides the mechanism through which the Government, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and churches are directly represented and can have input into decisions taken at the highest governmental level.

To improve coordination and set proper targets in various sectors and develop realistic programme components, the Government of Papua New Guinea is now endeavouring to link the work of the recently established Commission on Sustainable Development, the National Population Council, the National Women's Council and various policy-coordinating bodies to the overall supervision, management and direction of the high-level National Planning Council. The National Planning Council is a strategic resource-management decision-making tool established by the Cabinet to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in the mobilization of resources and resource allocation towards attaining national priorities and objectives.

My delegation believes that with this operational decision-making structure in place, linking different sectors and participants, Papua New Guinea will be able to improve its capacity to take on additional responsibilities within the framework of international cooperation, with specific reference to the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action.

I wish to re-emphasize that the direction of international development cooperation should be focused on improving the programme content of national strategies in order to reflect the realities of individual countries.

We urge that in the implementation of the Programme of Action, the international community to take into consideration the multicultural traditions and value systems of various regions and countries and their particular geographic and demographic diversities. In Papua New Guinea and the Pacific, we would like to highlight the youthful character of our population, the harsh terrain and the geographic isolation. We therefore give priority to the development of infrastructure, such as transport and communication, and we place emphasis on management and institutional capacity-building, information technology resources and the use of educational processes in human resource development as important project components that will determine our overall success in achieving our national development objectives.

We recognize the benefit of population stabilization, which can be achieved through the improvement of access to reproductive health care, lowering death rates and raising educational levels, and improving the status and the empowerment of women as an important factor in the success of population management and development.

Therefore, my delegation believes that the adoption of the Programme of Action before us is of great importance in balancing the needs of the growing global population and other sectoral development priorities, which is critical in achieving population stabilization, and hence ensuring long-term socio-economic and political stability within our respective countries .

In conclusion, we urge this body to give clear guidelines, without political prejudice on the implementation of the Programme of Action by the various agencies and organizations of the United Nations system. We have so far made positive progress in Cairo on the question of institutional arrangements.

In this regard, my delegation is following closely the current debate taking place on the mechanisms for implementation of the Programme of Action and the future executive board of the United Nations Population Fund.

My delegation considers that a collective and harmonious decision is required to establish an effective institutional arrangement.

This is indeed an important prerequisite for the successful implementation of the Programme of Action. Papua New Guinea looks forward to working in cooperation with the international community to meet the goals and aspirations we set in Cairo for the betterment of our respective citizens.

Mr. Seniloli (Fiji): I am pleased to address the Assembly today on a matter of great importance not only to my country but to the world as well. But first of all, I join other delegations in offering my congratulations to the Government and the people of Egypt for hosting a most successful conference. In both form and substance, the International Conference on Population and Development set standards of excellence which will be the yardstick against which future international meetings will be measured.

It also gives me much pleasure to extend the appreciation of my delegation to Mrs. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the Conference. Mrs. Sadik's involvement and exceptional leadership skills have become a hallmark of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Cairo Conference would have been significantly poorer without her dynamic input.

I also offer my delegation's congratulations to the UNFPA on its twenty-fifth anniversary. Fiji was honoured, along with other countries, to sponsor a resolution debated in this very Assembly only a few weeks ago applauding the UNFPA. The South Pacific headquarters of the UNFPA is located in the Fiji capital, Suva. A UNFPA Country Programme Technical Support Team for the Pacific is also located in Fiji. It is one of the eight Country Teams established by the UNFPA. I also take this opportunity to renew my Government's strong support for the valuable and untiring work of the UNFPA's regional office and to thank the organization for the provision of its technical support team.

Fiji was privileged to have participated in the Conference, where it was represented at the ministerial level. While we are, by any standards, a small country we are nevertheless pleased that we were able to respond to the invitation of the international community to deliberate on the key issues of population, economic growth and sustainable development.

One of the significant achievements of the Conference was that it reaffirmed the importance of women, women's reproductive rights, women's health and women's empowerment in the global agenda. It recognized that investment in women's health, education and empowerment is an essential component of social and economic development. The consensus on the Programme of Action was indeed the remarkable outcome of the Conference. Fiji is fully committed to achieving the goals and objectives contained in the Programme of Action. In this regard, however, we believe that, ultimately, a policy of greater self-reliance will produce the most enduring and constructive results at the national level.

Fiji accepts that a significant share of the responsibility for giving effect to the Programme will rest with national Governments. Roughly two thirds of the costs to implement the Programme of Action will be borne by the countries themselves. It is against this background that my delegation associates itself with other delegations that have urged the developed industrialized countries to demonstrate concrete evidence of their commitment to the Programme. Fiji also believes that non-governmental organizations could play a catalytic role in ensuring that the United Nations system remains faithful to the commitments that were made at the Conference. At the national level, Fiji will encourage the continued participation of non-governmental organizations and community-based groups towards the goals of Cairo. Governments can create favourable environments for helping to alleviate poverty, enhance employment and create sustainable and healthy populations. But increasingly, it is being realized that they cannot do everything. The private sector must also have a larger role in this coalition to activate the Programme of Action.

Small-island developing countries will need the combined partnership and support of the international community if they are to have a realistic chance of making the Programme a practical reality. In this connection, Fiji believes that paragraphs 16.18 to 16.20 of the Programme of Action will be critical in determining the medium- to long-term success of the Conference. Cairo was only the beginning of a long and holistic process. It was pivotal in that it gave explicit recognition to the need for new and additional financial resources. It would be a mistake, however, to think its achievements are already within our grasp. They will neither come soon nor easily. They will require considerable effort. There is also little doubt that the availability and early mobilization of financial resources will be a critical element underpinning the success of activities at the national level to breathe life into the Programme of Action.

In this connection, Fiji will closely observe, along with other Members of the United Nations, future efforts by the donor community to translate the goals of the Conference into reality. Fiji believes that international financial organizations and, in particular, the Bretton Woods institutions must necessarily play a strategic part in providing the enabling environment that could empower national Governments to assume greater responsibility for implementing the goals of the Programme of Action. The meeting of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development later this month will provide an excellent opportunity to confirm the readiness of the developed countries to make good on the pledges that were made in Cairo. Fiji would also urge those Governments that have subscribed to the Amsterdam Declaration on a Better Life for Future Generations, to renew their efforts to allocate greater resources to population programmes in order to meet the needs of the millions of people in developing countries in the field of population activities.

The Programme of Action will remain the blueprint for sustainable-development planning into the next century. For Fiji, as a small island developing country, there is much contained in the Programme that has linkages with what emanated from Rio and Barbados.

Copenhagen, Beijing and Ankara will also have a significant impact on the principles that underlie the consensus at the International Conference on Population and Development.

Increasing urban drift will have implications for urban population densities. Such processes will have ramifications for urban habitats and impose greater pressures on already fragile island ecosystems.

The social goals of the International Conference on Population and Development — education, health, universal access to reproductive health care and family planning — will promote social equality, because they take into consideration gender, geographical and socio-economic disparities. In this complex matrix, of which our understanding is far from complete, poverty, employment and social integration will be affected. We therefore think that it might be useful for appropriate institutions to be identified as focal points, at both the regional and international levels, to coordinate the sometimes bewildering number of processes that give rise to an ever increasing number of international strategies having as their ultimate aim the betterment of the human condition.

The time is now right to move forward. Fiji will closely follow the steps that are taken to give practical expression and impetus to the agenda agreed upon at the Conference. In this process, we share the views of those who contend that the Economic and Social Council must play an integral role in broadly monitoring and coordinating the modalities that would ensure timely delivery of the promises of Cairo. My delegation also supports the suggestion that the Assembly should organize a regular review of the implementation of the Programme of Action. It behoves each of us to be vigilant in this process. We intend to be an active participant in it. It is in our sustained vigilance that we might better guarantee that the Programme of Action will become meaningful.

At the subregional level Fiji will seek to engage its neighbours in an active dialogue to further explore ways in which the South Pacific Forum secretariat could be better positioned to respond to the challenges posed by the Programme of Action. We believe that, as an overarching subregional organization, the Forum could play a proactive role, particularly in capacity-building, the sharing and exchange of information and experience and the coordination of appropriate donor-donee responses. The South Pacific Commission, with its special mandate in the area of demography, will also be a key regional player.

We further believe that the United Nations Development Programme in particular, with its well recognized capacity for project formulation and delivery at the national level, could play a pivotal role in complementing and reinforcing the activities of regional institutions. In addition, the Pacific Operations Centre of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), which is headquartered in Port-Vila, Vanuatu, would be well placed to complement the activities of the Suva regional office of UNFPA, in coordination with United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and other actors within the United Nations system. We believe that greater intraregional cooperation between all these bodies will make for more efficient delivery and enhance the chances of early implementation of the Programme of Action at both the national and regional levels.

Let me conclude by stating the obvious. Without a concerted and sustained global partnership, the Programme of Action that was so deftly constructed at Cairo will have a poor chance of success. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that this innovation is given every encouragement to succeed. If there was ever any doubt about our interdependence, Cairo has reaffirmed loudly and clearly that international cooperation is crucial in ensuring sustainable development and lasting global peace and security. Let us now rededicate all our Governments to realizing the goals of the Conference.

Mr. Illueca (Panama) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The delegation of Panama wishes to welcome before the General Assembly the achievements of the International Conference on Population and Development. The Government of Panama had an opportunity to do so at the closing meeting of the Cairo Conference, when, as Chairman of the regional Group, it spoke on behalf of the States of Latin America and the Caribbean. Now the delegation of Panama wishes to reaffirm its appreciation for the work done by the officials of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), both for the international assistance provided to our country and for the preparation and execution of the International Conference on Population and Development. The skills of Mrs. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the Conference and Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, and of her team have, with the success of the Conference, become even more evident.

The commitments undertaken in the spirit of Cairo now depend on the will to implement them shown by all

the parties called on to play a role in a field of unquestionably great interest and high priority for all Governments and societies.

Let us recall that the International Conference on Population and Development was convened explicitly to address population concerns as they relate to sustained economic growth, sustainable development, poverty alleviation, sexual equality and reproductive health. As the Secretary-General stated in his report on the work of the Organization, the objective of the Conference was to forge

> "an international consensus on a 20-year plan of action that addresses population issues as an indispensable component of sustainable development", *(A/49/1, para 228)*

as defined at the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

In the view of the Secretary-General, the programme implications of the Conference pose important problems for the future. For it is clear that, like the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen, the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing, and the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, to be held in Istanbul — meetings with which the Cairo Conference shares many objectives — the Cairo Programme of Action will be a positive and dynamic force only if Governments, local communities, the non-governmental sector, the United Nations system and the international community demonstrate genuine determination to translate the recommendations of the Conference into positive measures.

Panama is a small country, in terms of territory and population, by comparison with neighbouring countries and other countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region. But destiny has determined that, because of our geographical location as a centre of global communications, we have a very well informed population and personalities and groups that are very attentive to population problems. Panama went to Cairo with a diagnosis on population that had been arrived at by governmental authorities and representatives of civilian society.

In harmony with the Cairo spirit, Panama will henceforth support all United Nations actions in respect of population and development that meet the following conditions: coherence with earlier programmes that have proved to be effective; the feasibility or possibility of achievement within the assigned financial resources; synergistic qualities that make it possible for organs and programmes to work together to ensure the attainment of the objectives; updating of strategy, enabling the Programme of Action approved in Cairo to be adapted continuously to the reality of the time and place of application; regional consensus that the measures and projects chosen for each region have the consent of Governments and of civilian societies in the respective regions; and moral justification for both the principles and the goals of projects shared by the peoples — projects that must have an appropriate relation to national and regional values and identities.

Governments and civilian society recognize the legitimacy of new strategies to deal with new problems whose solution requires global targets. These strategies and objectives lose legitimacy if they are not in keeping with the values and the innate importance of cultural identities.

Those are some of the factors that my delegation felt it would be appropriate to emphasize today.

The delegation of Panama is very aware of the fact that, because of the framework in which the Programme of Action has been placed, it is necessary to chart a course if it is to work.

My delegation believes that the wisest course is to work with the personnel and the mechanisms that have proved themselves. Which are they? Perhaps existing mechanisms, but improved and strengthened? Or perhaps new mechanisms with the cooperation of existing staff and structures? We need to find answers to these questions. Solving the problem is crucial to the Programme of Action. Political will and prudence, which usually produce the best results, will provide the best answer in this case.

The General Assembly and the other principal organs of the United Nations must always bear in mind the fact that the Organization is working within the framework of a changing international environment, in which solutions are in urgent demand, and that conferences are being prepared and held whose mandates and results are closely related to the priorities and urgent needs of the contemporary world.

The delegation of Panama believes that the first stage of the Programme of Action should consist of the production of an integrated strategy to assess the impact of programmes that are under way and new national

programmes inspired by the Cairo Conference. We believe also that what is needed is an approach that ensures wide dissemination of data related to population. At the national and regional levels in particular, information services should be geared to wide exchange and dissemination, between population specialists, of successful innovations with regard to methods and materials.

In a word, if the United Nations wants to ensure the success of the Programme of Action that was adopted by the Cairo Conference it must give priority to supporting and strengthening national and regional institutions, which, in Latin America, have proved to be exceptionally competent in the fields of demographics in particular and social sciences in general.

The delegation of Panama believes that if the Programme of Action adopted in Cairo is to be implemented, priorities among possible responses must be set. Here, we feel that the institutional problems posed by implementation must be solved in such a way as to preserve the existing United Nations relationships. My delegation believes that the Programme of Action must be carried forward with the participation of all sectors that have any familiarity or relation with its objectives and strategies, which, in accordance with the Cairo spirit — I repeat: in accordance with the Cairo spirit — are to make a contribution to satisfying human needs and fulfilling the individual human rights of every man, woman and child in the world.

Mr. Cho (Republic of Korea): I should like to begin by thanking the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Mrs. Nafis Sadik, and her staff for their thorough preparations for the Conference. My delegation also expresses its sincere gratitude to the Egyptian Government and people for their hospitality and graciousness, which helped to ensure the success of the Conference.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to associate itself with the views expressed this morning by Ambassador Lamamra, the Permanent Representative of Algeria, on behalf of the Group of 77. His excellent statement conveyed the basic positions of the Republic of Korea with regard to the population issue.

My delegation wholeheartedly welcomes the adoption of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. I believe that the 1994 Cairo Conference gave the international community a genuine opportunity for close cooperation in addressing this pressing global situation. Indeed, there were many notable and positive outcomes, which made the Conference a great success. In particular, my delegation welcomes the strong commitment and spirit of cooperation that prevailed during the deliberations and facilitated the discussion of otherwise sensitive and politically charged issues. We hope that the momentum that was demonstrated in Cairo will be accelerated and carried into the forthcoming international Conferences, including the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

My delegation shares the view that one of the most positive outcomes of the Conference was the overwhelming recognition that the empowerment of women was a critical factor in dealing with the population issue. Endowing women with educational and political opportunities, as well as legal and institutional support structures, will lead to their improved economic, social and political status, which in turn will allow them to play a more prominent role in population issues.

Another strong aspect of the Programme of Action is the section dealing with family planning and reproductive rights and health services. Conveying the necessary information to the general population is not an easy task, and simply cannot be fulfilled at the national level alone. Grass-roots participation should therefore be an integral part of the effective implementation of the Programme of Action. It is a primary responsibility of the Government to encourage local leaders and other key actors at the grass-roots level in many villages to communicate the importance of family planning and reproductive health services.

For the past three decades, the Government of the Republic of Korea has made efforts to continuously draw attention to the population issue through the media and public information campaigns. My country also instituted a population programme similar to the one described by Ambassador Wisnumurti of Indonesia, in which emphasis was placed on creating small and prosperous families. My country's experience has shown that family planning and the provision of health services are driving forces behind positive changes in population dynamics. It has been clearly proved that these kinds of population measures bring about increased economic growth and social development, which are in themselves factors for population stabilization.

The immediate challenge facing us now is the implementation of the Programme of Action. While the

objectives and targets set out in the Programme of Action are practical and feasible, even the most constructive plans must be supported by adequate financial resources and the political will of countries.

The implementation of the Programme of Action can be realized only through international cooperation. It is encouraging to hear that the developed-country parties and relevant international organizations have announced their commitment and plans to increase external financial resources in assisting developing countries. We commend the various actors, including Member States, non-governmental organizations and individuals, that have already begun to work to implement the commitments they made at the Conference.

The relevant bodies of the United Nations should play a central role in the implementation of the Programme of Action. In this regard, it is crucial to strengthen and coordinate the work of the UNFPA, the Population Division of the Secretariat and the Population Commission in order to conduct effective follow-up activities.

With regard to exchanges on experience, technical know-how and ideas on family planning programmes among developing countries, I am pleased to inform members that my Government and UNFPA are co-sponsoring a population symposium to be held from 21 to 24 November 1994 in Seoul. The symposium will focus on population issues relating to gender preferences for children in South and East Asia, resulting in the rise of female infanticide and an imbalance in the ratio between male and female populations. This seminar will be attended by a number of Asian countries for the purpose of sharing relevant experience and collectively seeking workable solutions.

The Republic of Korea has attached great significance to population issues throughout its entire development process and has felt that the population issue always stood at the core of its development strategy. We fully subscribe to the belief that in order for development to be successful and sustainable, population issues must be considered as an integral part of any national development strategy.

Mr. Woroniecki (Poland): Let me first thank Mrs. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the 1994 Cairo International Conference on Population and Development for her very active role in the preparation process of the Conference, as well as during the Conference itself. We are convinced that Mrs. Sadik will also continue to provide adequate leadership in the follow-up to the Conference.

I should also like to express our sincere appreciation to the Government of Egypt, which created excellent conditions for that giant gathering. Our thanks also go to the Secretariat for the comprehensive report in document A/CONF.171/13 and Add.1.

The Cairo Conference has successfully brought to light the multifaceted interrelationships between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development, and advances in the education, economic status and empowerment of women. The Conference has followed and built upon other important events, such as the World Summit for Children, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

At the same time, the outcome of the Conference in Cairo may be expected to exert an impact on other major Conferences in 1995 and 1996, such as the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II).

The Programme of Action approved by the Cairo Conference reflects the broad consensus that worked out the common ground in the sphere of population and development. Such a need had developed since the World Population Conference at Bucharest in 1974 and the International Conference on Population in Mexico City in 1984, to which many of the preceding speakers have alluded.

Of crucial importance is the awareness expressed during the Conference that the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Programme of Action is the sovereign right of each country. Of similar importance is also the commitment to observe universally recognized human rights.

The results of the Conference will depend to a great extent on concrete action that should be initiated as a result of the Programme of Action. The Programme encompasses activities at the international as well as the national level. The process therefore implies the involvement not only of Governments and the international community but also of local communities, the non-governmental sector and all other concerned organizations and individuals.

It is possible that no single group in the Conference process has had as profound an impact as the non-governmental sector. Thousands of representatives of non-governmental organizations contributed their experience and their commitment to the goals of the Conference. We should look at practical ways of further expanding the participation of non-governmental organizations, in particular in UNFPA-financed activities.

We strongly believe that inter-agency and intersectoral cooperation and collaboration must also be strengthened in the field of population. We duly appreciate the role played by UNFPA, the United Nations Population Division, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation, the United Nations Development Fund for women, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Bank and the regional development banks and the United Nations regional commissions. We would be grateful for their further involvement in the follow-up process to the 1994 Cairo Conference.

According to the Programme of Action, two thirds of the costs will continue to be met by the countries themselves. The remaining third is to be generated by the international community. This implies the need for additional resources to support programmes addressing population and development goals. International assistance should be concentrated on countries with the greatest gaps between the goals of the International Conference for the year 2015 and their present situation.

The current decade has witnessed an unprecedented dynamic rate of population growth, which makes it imperative for us to take concrete action relating to the rate of this growth, both worldwide and in individual regions of the world. In many cases people are suffering from shortages of food and water, a housing deficit, unemployment and a lack of adequate medical services. Migration continues in large numbers, both internally and across borders. The natural environment is becoming seriously threatened. The international community cannot remain indifferent to these phenomena.

Poland, a country in transition, has to face social and economic consequences arising from the ongoing systemic reform. The country's economic hardships affect social and demographic processes, as seen in the growing unemployment and difficulties of access to medical services. The unsatisfactory condition of health in our society is a great social and demographic problem for Poland, given the high mortality and sickness rates. The main threats to human health in Poland are circulatory diseases, cancer, injuries and poisonings, which together account for 80 per cent of deaths. The infant mortality rate is still high, despite its recent fall. Life expectancy, especially among males, is growing shorter as a result of the worsening conditions of health and high mortality rates. It is presumed that a failure to solve the problem of unemployment — 17 per cent of the total workforce right now — may increase emigration pressures.

The Polish Government expresses its satisfaction that the crucial recommendations of the European Population Conference, held in Geneva in March 1993, are contained in the Cairo Programme of Action. In our view, Special Recommendation 49 of the European Conference deserves special attention. It calls for the elaboration and implementation of a coordinated strategy to assist countries in transition in the field of reproductive health, including family planning. This also concerns assistance in the implementation of reforms in health systems and the field of migration.

We believe that the activity and dynamism demonstrated in the preparations for the Cairo Conference and at the Conference itself will continue. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should fulfil their respective responsibilities in providing system-wide coordination and guidance in the monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action and in making recommendations in this regard. The creation of a more coherent reporting system, taking into account the reporting procedures that are required in follow-up to other international conferences, should also be taken into consideration.

Compared with any earlier document on population and development, this Programme of Action is detailed in its analysis, specific in its objectives, precise in its recommendations and transparent in its methodology. We should be thankful to the United Nations system as a whole and to the United Nations Population Fund in particular for their readiness to provide all the advice and assistance we need. We shall do our best to ensure that the agreements made in Cairo become reality. This challenge can be met on the condition that there is human solidarity, mutual understanding and tolerance of differences.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.